



# University of Hawaii at Manoa

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RL:0414

SB 1763  
(HB 305)  
RELATING TO STATE PARKS

Statement for  
Senate Committee on  
Ecology, Environment and Recreation  
Public Hearing - 24 February 1981

By  
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SB 1763 recognizes the need for greater security services at State Parks in Hawaii and would establish a park ranger program within the Department of Land and Natural Resources by amendments to Chapter HRS 199. Our statement on SB 1763 does not represent an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

The Environmental Center testified earlier on a related bill, HB 61, as to our support for the establishment of a park ranger program. A copy of this earlier testimony is attached for your information.

While we fully support the intent of SB 1763 we question the need for the amendments to Chapter 199 as proposed in SB 1763. Specifically we note the following:

The duties assigned to the State park ranger corps by SB 1763 essentially duplicate the duties assigned to the existing conservation and resource enforcement officers under HRS 199-3 and State parks enforcement officers under HRS 184-5.

The only substantive addition to the existing statutes that would be provided by SB 1763 is the recognition of the duty to "promote through direct public contact, pleasurable and safe use of the state park system."

Since existing statutes (HRS 199-3) already provide for the broad, title 12 enforcement personnel it would seem more appropriate to address the recognized park security problem by amendment to Chapter 184-5. Police powers are already provided by HRS 184-5, however amendment is needed to recognize the duties of the present state parks enforcement officers to include the educational and public contact responsibilities traditionally associated with "Park Rangers". Because public awareness of the duties, responsibilities, and assistance of Park Rangers in the National Park Service and in other states is widely recognized, the change in title of the State Parks Enforcement Officers to State Park Rangers could encourage the needed public support, awareness and cooperation for State Park Ranger Programs.